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COCO
HE GOAT

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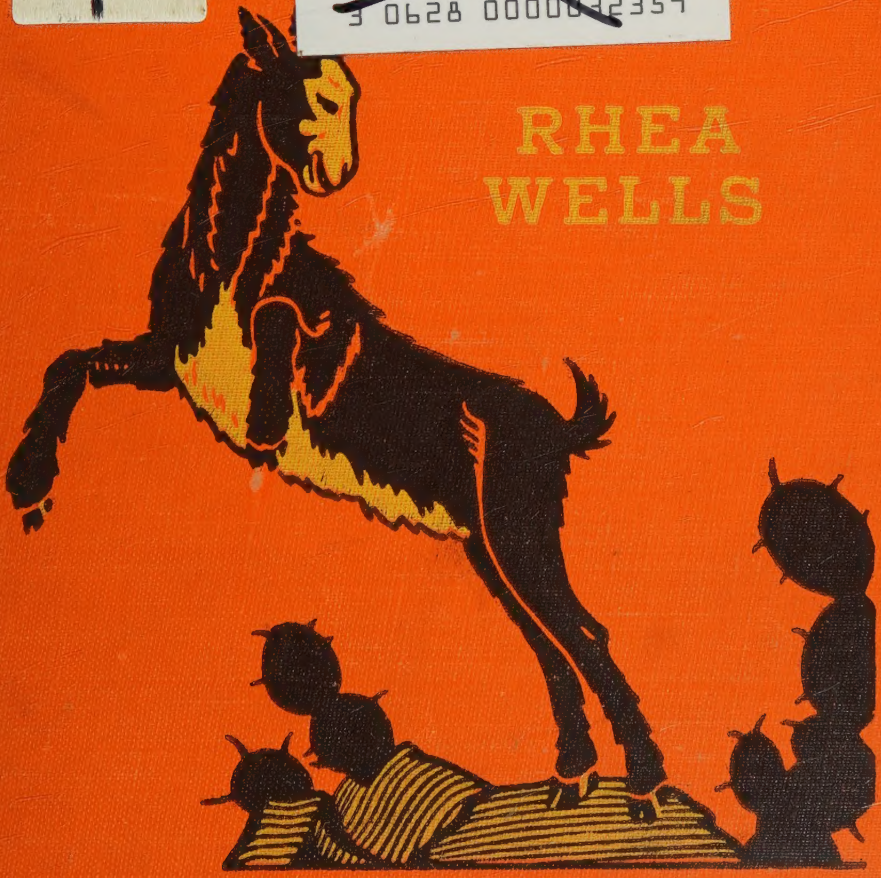
WELLS



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COCO THE GOAT

RHEA WELLS

Coco belonged to Garito, the goatherd. He was a cute little fellow but oh, so naughty! He ate the flowers, he walked on the clean clothes drying by the river, making little hoof marks all over them. He was stolen by some gypsies but managed to get away. Garito took him to the city where he ate the vegetables in the market. He even danced at Theresa's wedding and made the crowd laugh. He was a sweet little goat, and you will like him in spite of his mischief.

* *

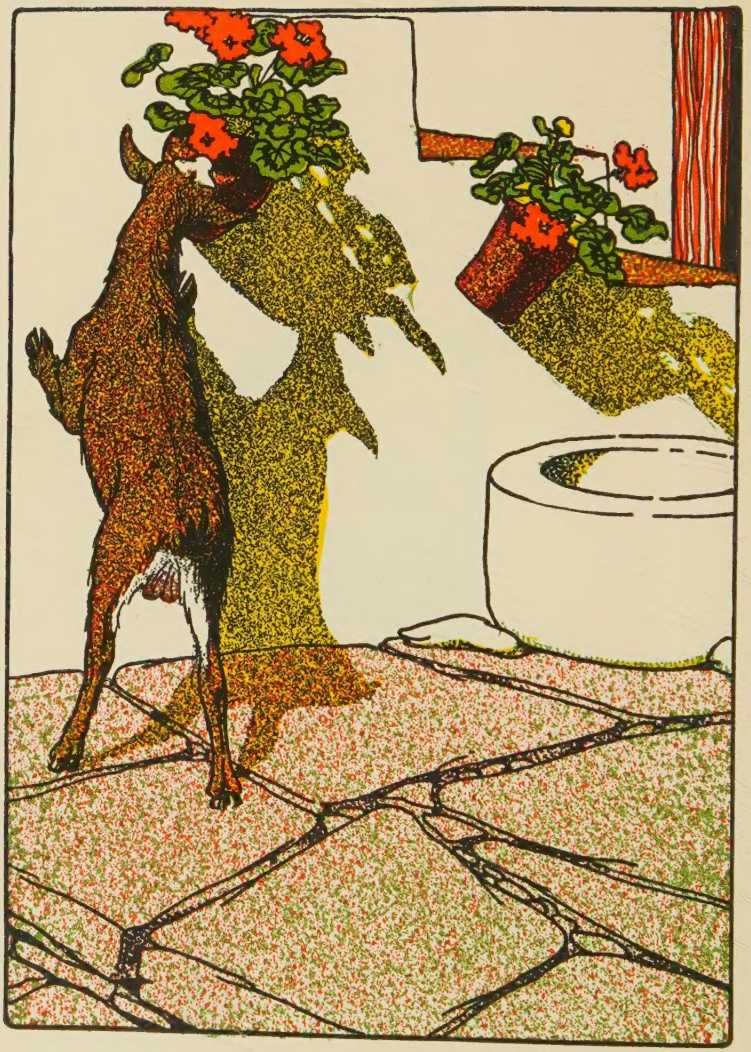
Coco
The Goat

Books by RHEA WELLS

AN AMERICAN FARM

PEPPI THE DUCK

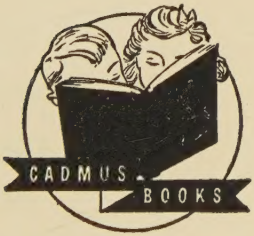
COCO THE GOAT



COCO ATE THE FLOWERS

Coco The Goat

Text and Drawings
by
Rhea Wells



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ANNE EATON

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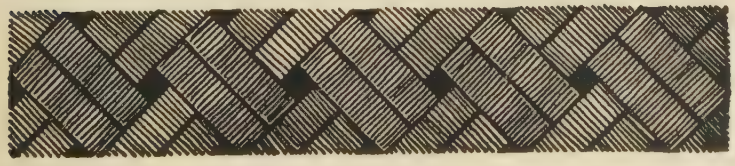

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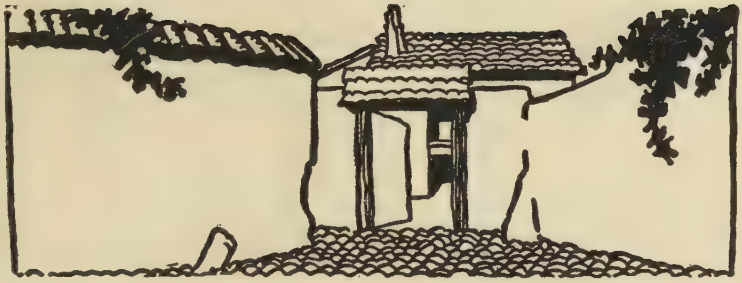
GARITO'S HOUSE

WHERE COCO LIVED

FAR, far away, in a country across the ocean, there is a little village. The village sits on the side of a hill and looks out across the plains at the high mountains to the north. The village has a

crooked little main street which runs up the hill to the middle of the town, where there is a plaza or square. From the four corners of the plaza little crooked streets run out to the ends of the town. On both sides of the street there are houses and high white walls. In one of the high walls there is a large doorway, and inside the doorway is a corral or courtyard. This corral is where Coco, the goat, lived.

Coco had been born in the corral. One morning when Garito, the boy who took care



of the goats, came out to look at them, he found a little baby goat. The little baby goat was lying close up against his mother. When Garito came the little goat looked up and said, "Mah-a-a-a!"

"Hello, Coco!" Garito said. "Where did you come from?"

"Mah!" answered the little goat. That is the way little goats talk. Everything they say has to be translated into plain words before anyone can understand it.

Garito picked up the baby goat and carried him into the house.

"Look, Mother," Garito said, "look at the baby. I'm going to call him Coco."

Just then Coco's mother put her head into the doorway and said, "Mah-a, mah-a! Where's my child?"

"There's your kid," Garito said. "Don't you worry about him so much. He knows I'm not going to hurt him."

Mother-goat shook her tail and walked

right into the house where Garito and his mother were. They began to laugh at her. Garito's mother broke a piece of bread and fed it to her.

"There's a nice bite of bread for you," Garito's mother said. "Now, Garito, take the baby back to the stable so he can have his breakfast, and then you come and eat yours!"

Garito carried Coco back to the stable where the other goats were, and Mother-goat followed. She ran along beside Garito,

looking up to see that her child was all right.

That day Coco's mother did not go out to pasture with the other goats. She stayed in the corral with Coco. For several days they stayed in the corral because Coco was not big enough nor strong enough to go out with the older goats.

The first thing Coco learned was walking. He watched his mother walk and then he tried to walk. His legs were so long and they seemed to want to go in all directions at

"I'M GOING TO CALL HIM COCO," GARITO SAID

once. He took a few steps and then stood still with his legs spread out. After he had tried a few times he could walk fairly well. In a few days he could walk all over the corral. He even went up the steps to the balcony and almost fell off when Mother-goat called him to come down. He went into the stall where the burro was kept and was nearly stepped on by the hairy little donkey with long ears, who did not see Coco when he came in.

Coco thought it was great fun to chase

the pigeons which came and ate any grain or crumbs which had been spilled on the ground. Coco would run at them, butting and kicking. When the pigeons flew away Coco stood looking at them as they spread their wings and flew into the air.

"Now how do they do that?" he wondered. Because Coco had no wings and could not fly no matter how much he wanted to fly.

In the evening, when Garito came home

"I WILL TAKE YOU WITH THE OTHER GOATS"

and brought the other goats with him, Coco always ran to meet him. Coco was always in such a hurry to get to Garito that he stumbled as he ran and almost fell down.

"Hello, Coco," Garito would say, "how's the little one? Come here and I will tell you what I did to-day." Then he would take Coco on his lap and tell him what he had done during the day. He would tell Coco what he had seen and what the goats had done, too.

One evening Garito told Coco all that had happened that day. Then he looked at Coco and said, "To-morrow I will take you with the other goats. But, you must promise to be good and not get into mischief."

"Mah-a-a!" Coco answered, quite as if he understood.

Maybe he did understand. He stayed awake very late that night and the next morning he woke up before all the stars had gone out of the sky.

DOWN BY THE RIVER

IN THE morning Coco went out with Garito and the goats. He did not know whether to stay close to Garito or his mother. He knew his mother would try to take care of him but he also

knew that Garito would take care of him, too. When a dog came running after the herd of goats and barked at them all the goats started to run. Mother-goat turned around and put her head down.

"Mah-a-a!!" said Mother-goat, as she bumped the dog in the ribs with her head.

The dog ran away yelping and howling because Mother-goat had given him such a hard bump in his ribs.

Every morning Coco went out with the

other goats. Sometimes they went over to the castle and while Garito sat in the shade under the high tower, the goats walked around and nibbled the grass and weeds. At other times they went down by the river, near the old bridge. Coco liked the river best.

Down by the river there were tall poplar and acacia trees and thorn bushes. When the sun grew very hot Garito and the goats all lay down in the shade of a tree until it grew cooler. Everything became very quiet, and

Garito and all the goats took a little nap until it was cooler.

Coco liked to slide down the big flat stones into the water. Under the old bridge there was one big stone which sloped down into the water. Coco climbed up on this stone. When he was on the very top he stiffened his legs and went sliding down into the water, *Splash!* It was so much fun that Coco did it time and again.

"Mah! mah!" cried Coco, as he went

COCO LIKED TO SLIDE DOWN INTO THE WATER

sliding down the stone into the water.

When he was tired of playing this game he went and stood on his hind legs and ate a few acacia leaves or came and lay down beside Garito. Garito would pull his ears and tell him he was going to have a beard just like Father-goat when he grew up. Coco didn't believe him, though, because Coco only had very short hair on his chin and couldn't see how that would grow into a beard.

One day while Mother-goat was asleep

Coco and Garito went under the bridge behind the big smooth rock and hid from her. After a while she woke up and looked for Coco. Coco was not there. Garito was not there. Mother-goat looked all around but did not see them. Then she called, "Mah-a-a-a-a!!" very long and loud.

Coco looked up at Garito and winked. Garito smiled at him and they sat very, very still.

"Mah! mah!" Mother-goat called again

and began running around in all directions looking for Coco. All the time she kept calling "Mah!"

After she had looked almost everywhere she came and looked behind the big rock. When she saw Coco she said "*Mah!*" in quite a different tone. Because she wanted to scold him for hiding from her.

Mother-goat butted Coco with her head and pushed him into the water. Coco scrambled out of the water and jumped up on

the big rock. "Mah!" Coco said saucily.

"Mah!" Mother-goat said. "I'll teach you to hide from me!" and she jumped up on the rock where Coco was.

Before she could butt Coco again he went sliding down the rock into the river. Mother-goat lost her balance and went sliding down after him. Coco got on the bank and ran away before his mother could reach him. She stood and shook her head at him. That was no way for her child to act.

It was almost time to go back to the village, so Garito called all the goats together. They climbed up the path to the road and crossed the bridge. Some of the goats wore bells around their necks. As the goats walked along the road the bells went tinkle, tinkle, tinkle. And the cloud of dust which rose from the road as they walked along was all yellow in the late sunlight.

Just before the goats reached the crooked little street which ran up the hill they began

to trot. When they got into the street they began to run. The bells went tinkle, tinkle, and their hoofs went click, click, click as the goats hurried home. They knew where their homes were and they were always in a hurry to get there.

AS THE GOATS WALKED THE BELLS WENT TINKLE

WASH DAY

THE women in the village took their washing down to the river, where they washed the clothes and then spread them on the rocks and the grass to dry. While the women washed the clothes

they talked. They dipped the clothes into the water and pounded them on the rocks; then they dipped them into the water again. While they were scrubbing and pounding their clothes they kept on talking.

One woman said, "That Coco is always into something. Yesterday he came into my patio and ate the flowers off my geraniums. If I catch him I'll teach him to leave things alone."

In a little while the women heard the goat

bells tinkling down the road. The goats crossed the bridge and came down by the river where the women were working.

A woman called to Garito and said, "Take your goats some place else to-day. If they are all like Coco we don't want them here."

Coco heard his name and said, "Mah!"

"What's the matter with Coco?" Garito asked. "He doesn't harm anything."

"Well, he ate my flowers," the woman said.

"It must have been some other goat," Garito answered.

"No, it was Coco," the woman insisted.

She was washing a shirt and she dipped it into the water and then pounded it on a rock.

"Take him away," she called.

"All right," Garito answered, "we'll go farther up the river to-day. Come on, Coco, they don't want you here."

"Mah, mah-a-a!" said Coco, and frisked his tail as he pranced along beside Garito.

THE WOMEN TOOK THEIR WASHING TO THE RIVER

What Coco really wanted to do was to stay and slide down the big rock. Those washerwomen had no right to drive him away.

Garito and Coco and the other goats went along the river bank until they came to a nice little grassy place where the goats could nibble.

While the goats nibbled Garito lay on the ground with his hat pulled over his eyes to keep the light out. Garito was so still that

Coco thought he had gone to sleep. Coco drew near Garito and looked under his hat to see if he was asleep. Garito's eyes were closed. He must be asleep!

"I'll just wake him up," Coco thought, and he took one jump and landed in the middle of Garito's stomach.

"Oof!" Garito said as he jumped up, spilling Coco on the ground. "Go away, I want to rest."

"Yes," Coco thought, "all you ever

seem to want to do is rest. I want to play."

"It's too hot to play now. Go away!"

Coco stood looking at Garito as he lay down and pulled the hat over his eyes again.

"Well," Coco said to himself, "I'll go back and help the washerwomen if you're not going to play." Then he said, "Mah-a-a!"

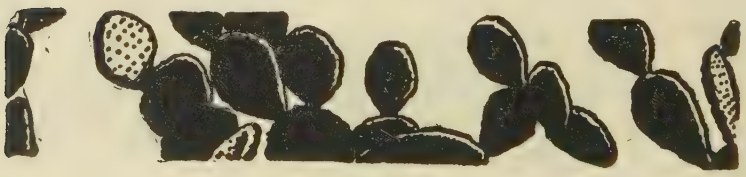
Coco started back to the bridge where the women were. It took him a long time to get there because all the bushes had such nice little green leaves. Coco had to stop at every

bush and nibble a few green leaves before he could go farther. At last he came in sight of the bridge and the washerwomen.

The women had finished working and were sitting on the rocks talking. The clothes were spread on the grass to dry. The clothes were very white and clean lying on the grass.

Coco looked at the women and at the clothes. "Too bad they have finished washing," he thought, "I wanted to help them."

Coco walked over to the clothes and



stood looking at a large white sheet. It was so nice and clean. Coco saw a shirt on the other side of the sheet so he thought he would look at that a little closer. He walked right across the sheet. Every step Coco took left a little dirty hoofprint on the sheet. After Coco had walked across the shirt there was a row of dirty little tracks on it.

Coco looked at the shirt, then he lay down on it and began to chew a sleeve. The sleeve did not taste as well as the little green

leaves. Coco got up and went back to the bushes with leaves on them. He was just having a nice little nibble when he heard one of the women call.

"Look at this," the woman said.

She had found the sheet Coco had walked on. She had found the shirt, too, with one sleeve all chewed.

"I know Coco did that," she said.

Coco heard his name. He hurried back to Garito. Garito would take care of him.

The woman came running after him calling, "Garito! Garito!"

Garito sat up and asked her what she wanted.

"Look at this, look at this!" the woman screamed. "Coco did it," she said, waving the sheet and the shirt.

Coco stood looking very innocent. There was nothing to make such a fuss about.

The woman said, "I'll catch you," and started for Coco. He saw her coming, ran

under some thorn bushes and got away.

"Come out of those bushes!" the woman called.

"Mah-a-a!" said Coco, and shook his head.

"Don't say mah-a-a to me!" the woman screamed.

Garito stood and laughed. The goats all stood and watched the woman waving the sheet and the shirt.

"And you laugh," the woman said to

COCO BEGAN TO CHEW A SLEEVE

Garito. "Now I have to wash these things again."

She went away waving the sheet and the shirt.

Coco came out of the bushes and jumped around Garito, shaking his head and wiggling his tail.

"Coco," Garito said, "you must not tease the washerwomen again."

"Mah-a, mah-a," Coco said. "I wasn't teasing them. I wanted to help them, but

they had finished the washing before I got there. Next time I'll surprise them."

THE CRICKET

COCO and Garito were up by the castle one day. Garito sat on the ground and leaned against the trunk of a fig tree. He and Coco had been eating figs but they were not very good. The

figs were not ripe enough. As Garito sat on the ground and leaned against the tree he was making a cricket cage.

After the cage was finished Garito was going to find a cricket, a little black cricket, to live in it.

"Crickets make very nice pets," Garito told Coco.

"Mah-a?" Coco asked. "Why are crickets such nice pets?"

"I will tell you," Garito said. "They are

COCO AND GARITO WERE UP BY THE CASTLE

nice pets because they are no trouble. They never get into mischief like a little goat named Coco."

"Mah! mah! mah!" Coco said. "I have to have some fun, don't I?"

"At night," Garito went on, "they sing. The cricket is called 'the canary of the bedroom.' "

"They go chirp, chirp, chirp," Coco thought. "Is that what you call singing? A cricket lives in the wall by the stable and

keeps me awake with his bothersome nose."

Every day, now, Garito and Coco looked for a cricket. They walked along the walls while the goats grazed in the fields. All the fields had low stone walls instead of fences around them. When a farmer wanted a wall around his field all he had to do was pick up the stones in the field and pile them around the edges and he had a wall. The crickets usually lived in the walls or under the walls. Coco always walked on the top of the wall

because he was not much interested in finding a cricket.

Once Coco was walking on a wall and a large bird with black and white feathers and a long tail flew to the wall and sat down in front of Coco. Coco ran at him and frightened him away.

"Coco, you must not do that," Garito said.

"Mah-a, why not?" Coco asked.

"That was a magpie," Garito told him.

"They are good birds. When you meet a magpie you must always say, 'Good morning, Mr. Magpie!' If you're not nice to magpies you will have bad luck. If they live in a cage they learn to talk and can say their names. That's more than you can do."

"Mah-a-a," Coco said. "Why should I say my name," he thought, "when everybody in the village knows it? Every place I go people say, Coco. Coco, Coco."

Garito kept turning over stones to see if

a cricket was hiding anywhere. Coco stood on the wall and watched him. It was no use looking. The crickets had all gone to some quiet, shady place where nobody could catch them.

Garito and the goats wandered across the field. Garito and Coco gave up looking for a cricket that day. When they did find one it was quite by accident.

Coco was walking on top of a wall as usual. He jumped down off the wall onto a

stone lying on the ground. The stone rolled over as Coco landed on it. Coco rolled over, too. A cricket had been under the stone. The cricket hopped and Coco scrambled to his feet and skipped around the cricket shaking his head. Every time the cricket hopped Coco jumped up into the air, said "Mah!" and shook his head.

Garito came to see what Coco had found. Garito caught the cricket and put it into the cage.

COCO PRANCED AROUND THE CRICKET

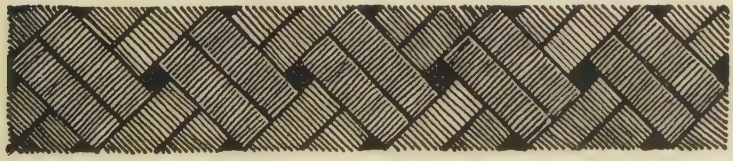
Every day the cricket went out with Garito to the fields. It liked to be carried around in Garito's pocket. In the pocket it was nice and dark and the cricket took a nap until Garito took the cage out of his pocket. The cricket was liveliest at night and sang his chirp, chirp, chirp song long after Garito had gone to sleep. But in the morning when Garito woke the cricket was always still.

THE GYPSIES

AS GARITO and the goats crossed the old bridge one morning the tall poplars by the river fluttered their leaves in a little breeze. From some place down by the river they heard music.

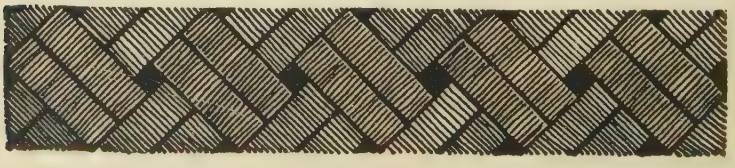
The music got into Coco's feet, and he pranced along like a circus horse. Garito and the goats hurried down to see who was there.

Under the tall poplars there was a Gypsy camp. There was a caravan which looked like a little green house on wheels. It had a door at the back and windows at the sides with yellow curtains hanging at each window. There was a tent near the caravan, with a red curtain hanging over the entrance. A girl was dancing and three boys were playing for



her. One boy played the violin, one played the guitar, and a very little boy played a triangle. The music was gay and the girl, in her bright-colored dress with a brighter kerchief on her head, smiled as she turned and tripped about.

When they saw Garito with his goats they all stopped and looked at them. An old woman, who was bending over a fire where she was cooking something in an earthenware dish, turned to look, too. For a little



while Garito and the goats stood and stared at the Gypsies, while the Gypsies stared at them.

"Play some more," Garito finally said.

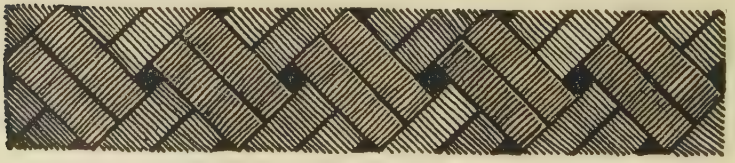
"No," one of the boys answered, "we don't play for strangers unless we are paid."

"I can't pay you," Garito said, "because I haven't any money. But the music was very nice!"

"Oh, well," the boy said, and smiled, "if you haven't any money, that's different!"

He began to play again. This time the music was slow. The boy began to sing a song about a great river which ran down to the sea. The river was very old and very wide and nobody knew how long it had been there. The song told about the river flowing between high mountains, through green fields and on down to the sea. The river flowed down to the sea just as it had always done.

"Have you seen that river?" Garito asked.



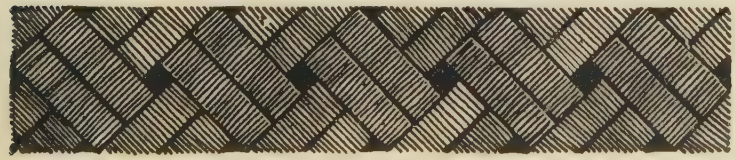
"Yes," the boy said, "we come from the country where it is."

"And is it very far away?" Garito asked.

"Yes," the Gypsy boy answered, "it is very far away. You must travel for many days before you come to the land where that river flows."

"And is it so beautiful?" Garito continued.

"Oh! very beautiful," the girl told him. "It is so wide no one can throw a stone across

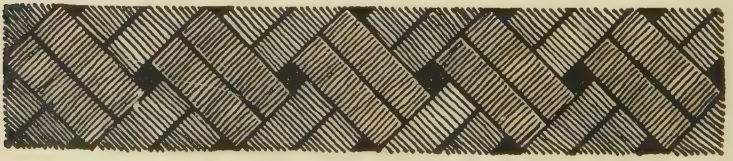


it. Where the river flows through the mountains there are old castles on the tops of the mountains. Robber barons used to live in the castles."

"I should like to go and see that river," Garito said.

"If you lived in a caravan," the boy told him, "you could go there. But you live in a house."

A man came out of the tent. He was wearing an embroidered vest, a kerchief tied



A GYPSY GIRL WAS DANCING

around his head, and boots. Gold hoops dangled in his ears.

"Do you want to sell a goat?" the man asked Garito.

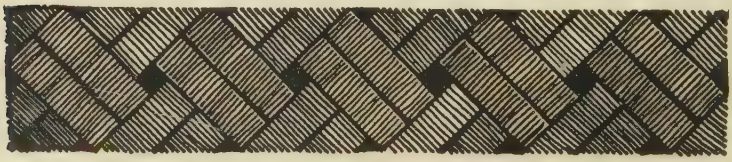
"No," Garito said, "they don't belong to me. Only the little one is mine."

"He's a nice little goat," a woman said.

Garito took the goats back across the bridge. He would stay away from those Gypsies who wanted his goats. Garito found a place not far from the bridge where the

goats could get enough to eat, so they stopped there. After about an hour Garito called Coco. Coco did not answer him. Garito could not find him anywhere.

Coco had gotten tired of the goats. Garito did not play with him and he wanted to see what was in that little house on wheels. He went back to the Gypsy camp. Garito was looking for him on the other side of the river. Coco walked into the tent where the Gypsies were. Before he knew what was happening



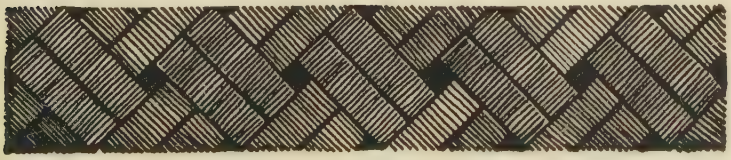
a woman caught him by one of his hind legs.

"Mah! mah! mah-a-a-a!" Coco yelled.

"Don't make such a noise," the woman said, "or I'll have to choke you!"

The man with the gold hoops in his ears said, "If you can find a goat, why buy one?"

The woman picked up Coco and carried him over to the caravan. She put him on the floor and began to tie his feet together so he could not stand up. While she was tying Coco's feet with a rope Coco heard Garito



talking outside. The woman went to the door and stepped down on the ground. She forgot to close the door.

"Have you seen my goat, the little one?" Garito asked.

"No," the woman said. "I haven't seen him."

Coco jerked his feet and wiggled around on the floor, trying to free himself. The woman had not tied the rope very well, because she was in a hurry when she heard

Garito. The string loosened a little. Coco pulled and kicked. He got one foot loose.

"Why don't you look around in the bushes?" the woman said.

"If Coco were in the bushes he would come when I call him." Garito told her. "He always does."

Coco got his feet out of the rope and stood up. The rope was still tied to one leg. As soon as Coco stood up he put his head out of the door and called, "Mah-a-a!"

The woman tried to close the door on him but Coco jumped to the ground and ran toward the bridge as fast as he could.

"That's Coco," Garito said. "He was in your wagon all the time. Why did you say you hadn't seen him?"

"That's my rope he took away with him," the woman said, and laughed. The joke was on her.

Garito went back to the goats. While he was untying the rope from Coco's leg he said,

"HE WAS IN YOUR WAGON ALL THE TIME"

"You were a silly little kid, Coco, to go to those Gypsies alone! But," he added, "you'll know better next time."

Coco looked up at Garito and said, "Mah-a!" Which meant "I know better now!"

IN THE CITY

IT WAS summer. The days were very hot. The sky was high and blue and not a cloud floated across it. The sky was bluer than anything else that Coco had ever seen. Garito took the goats down to

the river but the sun had drunk up most of the water. The river was smaller than it had been in the spring. In the middle of the day Garito and the goats were glad to spend their time in the shade of a wall or of some trees.

"Coco," Garito said one day, "we are going to the city to-morrow."

Coco looked at Garito and said, "Mah-a-a!"

"We have to go to town on the early train," Garito continued.

"When we get to the city we will go to see my sister who lives there."

Garito had another sister named Teresa, who lived at home. This sister was going to be married. That was why Garito and his mother and sister were going to the city the next day. They had to buy all kinds of things like lace and ribbons and earrings and lots of other things which they could not get in the village.

"And," Garito said to Coco, "I'll buy

THEY WERE ALSO GOING TO THE CITY

a bell for you to wear around your neck."

In the morning Garito put a collar around Coco's neck and tied a string to the collar.

"You can't run away from me now, you rascal," Garito said as he led Coco across the corral.

The railway station was a long way from the village. Garito, his mother, Teresa, and Coco left the village and walked along the dusty main road to the station. On the way they met an old man and woman from the

next village, who were also going to the city. The old people were friends of Garito's mother. The old woman was carrying a basket on one arm and in the other hand she had three live chickens with their feet tied together, heads down. On his shoulder the old man had a pair of saddlebags, made of striped woolen cloth. As they walked along they all talked about what they were going to do in the city.

At the station there were other people

waiting for the train. Garito's mother knew everybody. They all stood and talked as they waited. Garito and Coco were too nervous to stand still so they walked up and down on the platform. After a while the train came puffing along. Coco jumped at the string, but Garito held it fast.

The train stopped. Garito's mother opened one of the doors on the side of the car and climbed in. The old man and the old woman with the saddlebags, the basket, and

the chickens, followed. Garito and Coco got in last and sat by the window. Coco looked out at the moving landscape with its fields of wheat stubble and corn. The train stopped every few minutes to let people get off and on.

Garito's mother had brought a bundle tied up in a large red and white cotton kerchief. She untied the bundle and took out some bread and ham and a roast chicken. The food was offered to everybody who was sit-

ting near. The other people opened baskets and bundles and took out food, too. They passed their food to the people around them. As the train bumped along everybody ate and talked. Garito had a chicken leg and a chunk of bread. He gave Coco part of the bread.

In a few hours the train reached the edge of the city. Everybody collected their bundles and bags and got ready to leave the train. Garito's mother retied her kerchief and fastened up her bundle. As soon as the train

stopped in the station all the doors were opened and the people piled out, with their luggage, onto the platform. They hurried along the platform, through the gates, and out into the street. Garito carried Coco until they got into the street, then he put the little goat down.

Garito's mother said the way was shorter if they went through a side street.

"We can save time by going this way," she said.

THEY HURRIED ALONG

They hurried along through a narrow street which had shops on both sides of it. There were vegetable shops and meat shops and pastry shops. Coco had not known that there were so many shops in the world. He stared and stared at all the strange things around him. Garito had to keep pulling the string so he would not stop.

They turned a corner into another street which ran up a steep hill for a little way. Just around the corner Garito's mother met a

woman who was an old friend of hers. The woman wore a black dress and a black veil over her head. Hanging from her ears were large gold earrings.

Garito's mother and the woman greeted each other.

"What brings you to town, Louisa?" the woman asked.

"Teresa is going to be married next month and we must buy some things for her wedding," Garito's mother answered.

They were standing in front of a greengrocer's shop. The fruits and vegetables were piled on low stands in front of the shop. Under the stands were piles of green and yellow melons. The vegetables looked good enough to eat, thought Coco, as he stood and eyed them. There were yellow squashes and white squashes, purple eggplants, red tomatoes, and green spinach and lettuce.

"How nice and fresh the lettuce looks," Coco thought. "Just a little crisp salad

would taste exactly right, it seems to me."

Coco pulled at the string which Garito was holding. Garito was listening to his mother and the woman as they talked. The string slipped a little through his fingers. Coco pulled again. The string slipped out of Garito's fingers and fell on the pavement. Coco jumped up on the stand where the lettuce was piled and began to nibble the leaves. He bit a leaf off first one head and then another. They looked so good and tasted better.

He wanted to try all of them. Coco was so busy eating that he did not notice the shopkeeper, who came out to see if anyone wanted to buy his fruits and vegetables.

The shopkeeper saw Coco eating the lettuce and shouted, "A goat! A goat! Eating my salad. Saints protect me from such wicked animals!"

They all turned around to see what the trouble was and saw Coco standing on the pile of lettuce.

The shopkeeper ran at Coco, who jumped down off the lettuce. He knocked some heads of lettuce off the stand when he jumped and they went rolling across the pavement.

The shopkeeper yelled and said he would have to starve if people's goats came and ate up all his vegetables.

The woman in black stood and laughed. A crowd of people gathered to see what was happening. They all stood in the street and

"A GOAT! EATING MY SALAD!"

laughed at the shopkeeper. This made him very angry and he yelled louder. The people laughed at him all the more.

Finally Garito's mother said she would buy a melon. In fact she would buy two melons. That pleased the shopkeeper so much that he said it didn't matter about the lettuce and he gave Coco a cabbage leaf to eat.

Coco said "Mah-a-a!" which was the best he could do at thanking the man.

Garito carried one of the melons and his

mother carried the other. His mother said good-bye to the woman and they started up the street. They soon came to the house where Garito's sister lived. Inside the house it was nice and cool. They went up some stairs and then up some more stairs. Garito's mother rang a bell at a door and waited.

Garito's sister Maria opened the door.

When she saw who was there she was much pleased.

Maria cried, "Mama, Teresa, Garito!"

She put her arms around her mother and pulled her into the hall. Garito, Teresa, and Coco followed.

In the kitchen Garito's mother gave Maria the melons and told her about Coco and the lettuce.

"Now we must go to the shops and do our buying," Garito's mother said.

"But you must wait until you have had a cup of chocolate," said Maria.

They sat down and Maria made the choco-

late. In a few minutes it was made and Maria poured it into the cups. She put a dish of little sponge cakes on the table. They dipped the little cakes into the thick chocolate and ate them. As soon as the chocolate was eaten Garito, Teresa, and their mother left. Garito tied the string to a table leg and left Coco with Maria.

"Come back for dinner," Maria said as they left.

"We'll be back at two o'clock."

"Adiós," Garito's mother called back as she went downstairs.

"Adiós," Maria said, as she closed the door.

Teresa and her mother bought all kinds of things and looked at many others. They looked at shawls. Teresa chose a yellow one with a border of red flowers and a fringe. They bought many more things. Garito's mother said it was so hot in the city she must get a fan.

Garito saw a shop in which there were bells for sale. There were bells for donkeys and bells for goats. There were little bells for little goats. Garito tried the bells and took one which had a nice clear tone.

They went back to Maria's for dinner. Maria's husband was there when they got back.

Garito hung the bell on the collar around Coco's neck. Coco pranced about shaking his head and butting the table. He felt very

grown up with a bell dangling around his neck.

Coco got some leaves of salad for his dinner.

There were still many things which Teresa and her mother had to buy. In the afternoon they went to the shops again. They came back with many packages. The packages were made into two large bundles tied with string. Garito carried one of the bundles to the station when they went home.

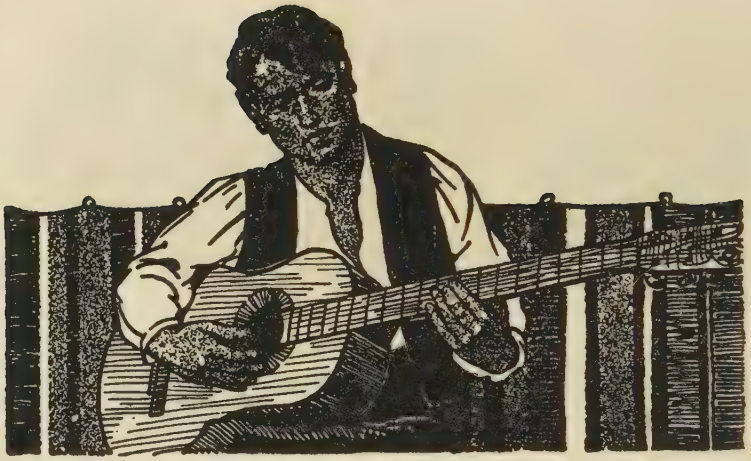
Coco pranced along proudly and thought everybody was looking at his new bell.

In the train they met the old man and the old woman. The old man's saddlebags were stuffed with things which he and his wife had bought. The old woman had given her chickens away. She still had the basket. It was filled with things to eat. She opened the basket and gave Garito some little cakes with pink sugar on them.

Coco and Garito were tired so they fell asleep and slept until someone woke them up and said they must get off the train. The sky was full of bright stars as Coco and Garito trotted home along the dusty road, up the crooked main street and into the corral.

In the corral Coco went to his mother and shook his head. The new bell tinkled clearly.

"Mah-a-a-a!" Coco said to his mother. "See what I got in the city."

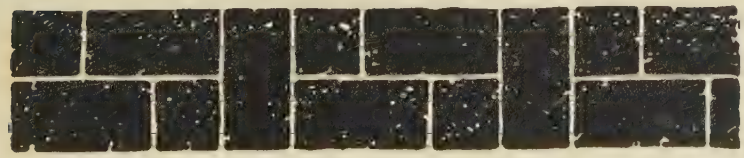


WHAT THE BAT SAW

COCO knew a bat. The bat slept in the stable where Coco slept. All day long the bat slept some place up near the roof of the stable among the beams. After Coco had gone to bed the bat

went out. He flew out of the door like a little black shadow and went flying away over the walls and housetops, fluttering his wings. When the bat came back he fluttered around up near the beams, making little noises.

While Coco was still a very little goat he had heard the bat squeaking up over his head at night. Coco had not known what the squeak noises came from. After a while Coco knew that it was the bat who said, "Squeak, squeak."



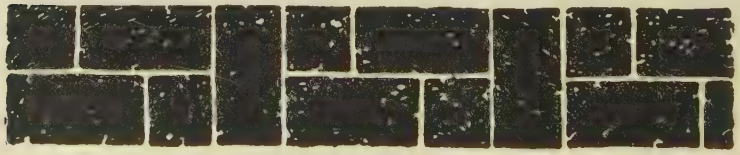
Coco listened and then said, "Squeak, squeak; what do you mean by that?"

The bat told Coco that that is the way bats talk. They talk to each other that way, in fact they talk to everybody like that.

"Too bad," Coco said. "If you could talk to me in goat language I could understand you better."

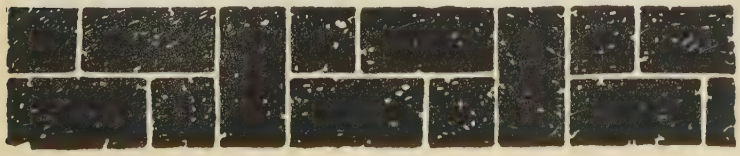
"Squeak, squeak," the bat answered.

"Well," Coco said, "maybe I can learn what your squeaks mean."



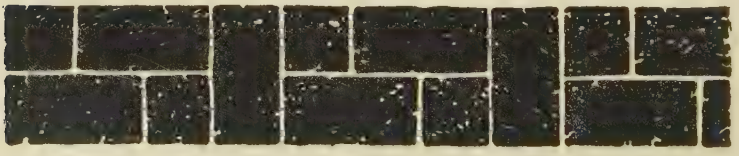
Before long Coco knew what the bat was saying. The bat flew out after dark and came back sometime in the morning before it grew light. Coco thought that was a very strange time to be going about. At times the bat came back to the stable and told Coco what he had seen, then flew away again. He never stayed long when he came to tell Coco a story.

One night the bat came swooping into the stable and hung himself upside down on one of the rafters. He squeaked so fast that Coco



did not know what he was trying to tell. At last Coco understood what had happened.

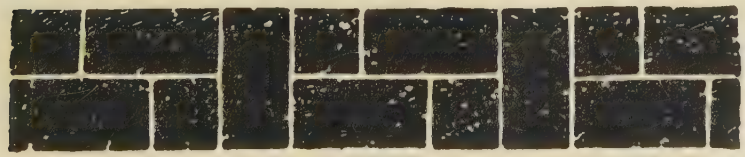
The bat had been flying around the village that night, catching gnats and mosquitoes, as usual. He heard some music which came from one of the houses. This bat happened to be very fond of music, so he flew to the house where the music was. The door of the house was open. The bat flew back and forth in front of the door doing a kind of dance in the air. The people in the house



THE MAN CAUGHT HOLD OF ONE OF HIS WINGS

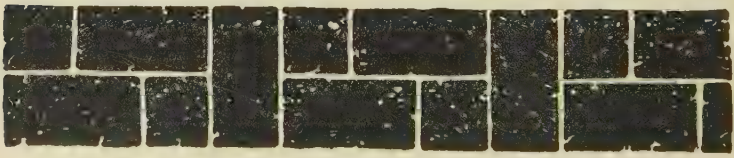
were very gay. The people who were not playing clapped their hands and tapped their heels to the music. At last the bat flew into the room where they were playing. As soon as he flew in the music stopped. Everybody jumped up and tried to catch him. One man slammed his hat over the bat and held him against the wall. The man caught hold of one of his wings and held him up.

Someone said, "Bats bring bad luck. They belong to the devil."



"They may belong to the witch who lives in the old tower," a boy said.

"Then," said the bat, "they began to talk about the witch. They said the witch stayed in the top of the big tower up at the old castle. Nobody had ever seen her because no one could climb the tower. The stairs had been broken hundreds of years ago and since then not a person had been up in the tower. But they all said the witch lived up there. She flew out on dark nights and rode on her



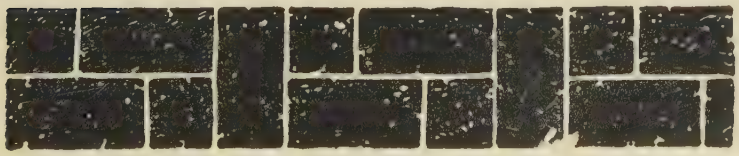
broomstick across the sky. Nobody ever saw her go and nobody ever saw her come back.

"While the people talked about the witch the man held me by one wing. When the man tried to take hold of my other wing I bit him and he dropped me on the floor.

"Before he could catch me again," the bat went on, "I flew out of the house and came back here."

"What about the witch?" Coco asked.

"Now I am going to fly up to the tower



and see if she is there," the bat answered.

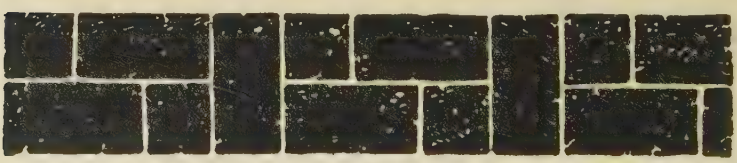
"You'll get into more trouble," Coco said. "You had better leave the witch alone."

"No trouble at all for me," the bat said. "I can fly as fast as she can."

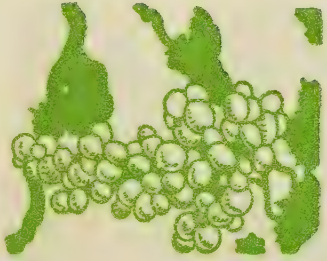
"Garito says witches can fly very fast," Coco said.

"What does he know about witches?" the bat asked Coco. "He never saw one."

"Garito knows about everything," Coco answered.



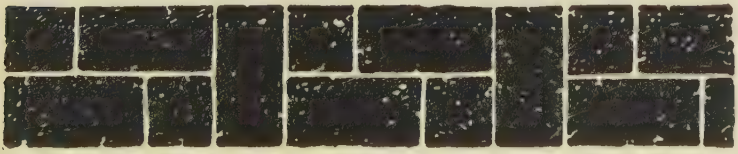
THE WITCH MIGHT KEEP HIM IN THE TOWER



"I don't think he knows much about witches, though," the bat said. "Now I'm off to the castle tower. When I come back I'll tell you about the witch."

Coco wondered if the bat would see the witch. If the bat met the witch he might not come back and tell about her. She might keep him up in the tower.

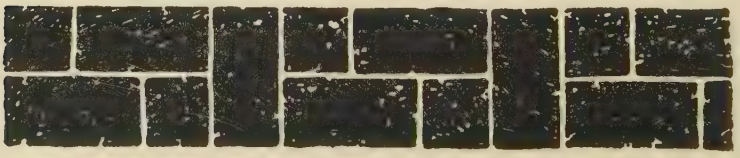
At last Coco fell asleep and was dreaming about sliding down the big rock. But instead of the water going "splash" it went "squeak"



when he slid into it. When the water went "squeak" Coco woke up. The squeak Coco had heard came from the bat, who had returned from the castle.

"You were gone a long time," Coco said. "Did you see the witch?"

"No," the bat answered. "I didn't see her because there is no witch there. All those people were silly when they talked about a witch. It was just one of those foolish stories they tell to frighten each other. Now I'm going to

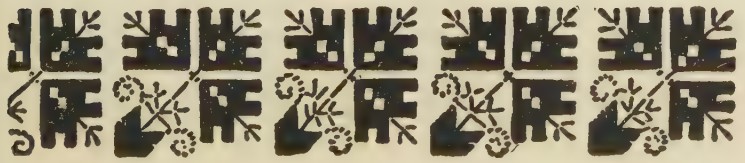


sleep and get a good day's rest," he said as he hung himself upside down on a rafter.

THE WEDDING

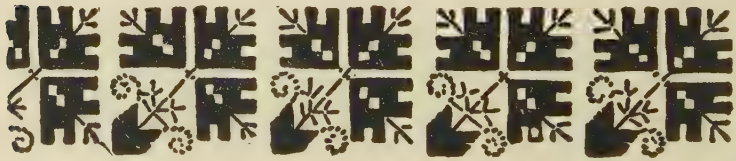
EVERY day, now, Teresa sat on the balcony and sewed. Some of her friends came and helped her. They pulled out threads and put in stitches. Teresa made a shirt for Juan. Juan was the man she

was going to marry. Teresa worked hard and made the shirt very beautiful, with lots of embroidery at the tops of the sleeves and lots of little plaits just above the cuffs. When the shirt was finished everybody said that they had never seen such a beautiful shirt as this one. Teresa's mother made the red stockings which Teresa was going to wear at the wedding. They all sat and sewed until the goats came home and the sun went down and it got too dark to work.



Coco came running into the corral every evening and went up on the balcony. He always wanted to see what was being made. As the goats came running down the street the bells tinkled and the women who were sewing knew that Coco would soon be with them.

Teresa had finished the shirt and was making her wedding dress. It was red and had gold lace on the skirt. Coco thought the dress was very pretty. He wanted a little piece of

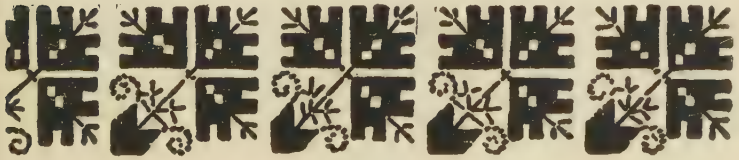


THEY SAT AND SEWED

gold lace and thought how nice it would look on his collar.

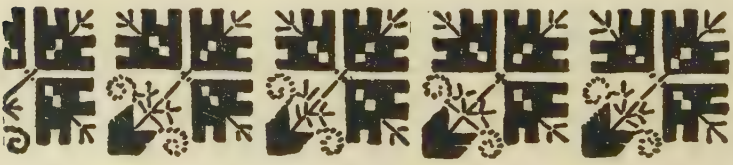
The day of the wedding drew nearer. Everybody was busy getting things ready. The walls of the corral were whitewashed. The inside of the house was whitewashed. Garito whitewashed the walls of the corral. Coco tried to help and put his feet in the pail of whitewash. His two front feet looked as if they had white socks on them.

Teresa went to the fountain at the cor-



ner of the street to get water. Coco went with her. Teresa carried the water jar on her hip. Coco always liked going to get the water. The women at the fountain stood and talked while they waited their turn to fill the jars. All the gossip of the village was exchanged while the water jars were being filled. Coco heard all the latest news at the fountain.

The women and girls saw Teresa and Coco coming down the street. Coco thought his white socks looked very nice. The women

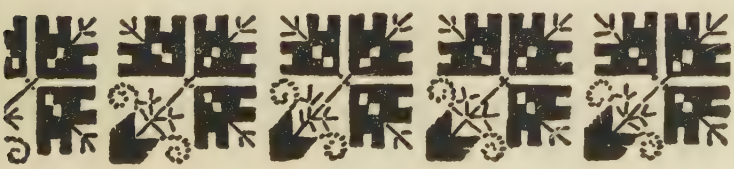


laughed at Coco and asked him if he was getting ready for the wedding. Coco stood on his hind feet and showed them the white socks.

"Mah-a-a, man-a-a," Coco said. "See my socks. Aren't they fine?"

The women asked Teresa all about the wedding. They wanted to know how many people were coming.

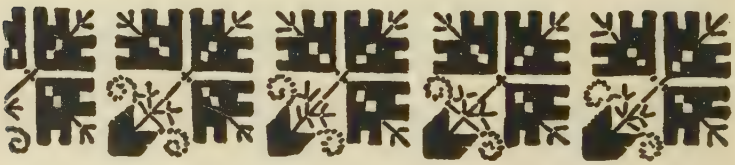
"Oh!" Teresa said. "A great many people are coming. Juan has many friends. They will



all be here. My sister Maria and her husband are coming from the city. There will be singing and dancing all night long."

"It will be the biggest wedding that's been in the village for a long time," a girl said.

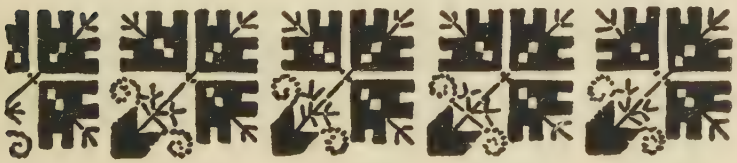
They forgot to gossip about other things and talked about the wedding instead. Coco felt that the wedding was partly his because he belonged to Garito and Garito was Teresa's brother. This was going to be a fine wedding. All the women said so.



The day before the wedding was full of hurry and bustle. Even before Coco went out to pasture with the other goats, people were coming and going to and from Teresa's home. Coco went and looked into the house. There were pots over the fire. There were pots sitting on the hearth around the fire to keep hot.

"Everybody must be terribly hungry," Coco thought. "I must get some of that, too."

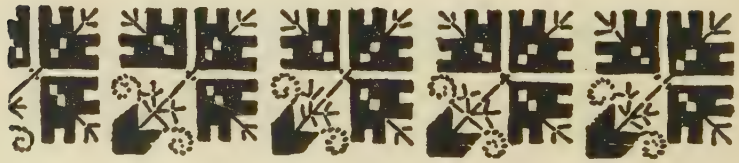
He hurried home in the evening. There



were people still coming to the house. Some of the people were staying with other families, friends of Teresa's mother. They all came to eat with Teresa and her mother.

Juan and his friends came at night and played and sang songs to Teresa. Later they went to the tavern where they kept the music going. Then, late in the night they came back and played to Teresa.

In the morning everybody was up early. The guests who had slept at other houses

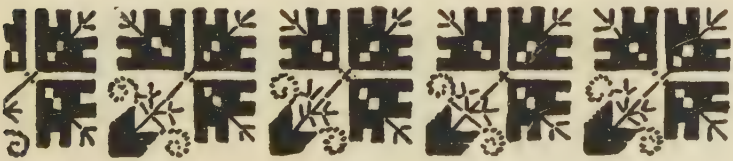


COCO DANCING

WITH THE BRIDE

came to breakfast. Some of the women went to the fountain to get water. Others helped Teresa's mother in the house. At last Teresa was dressed in her wedding dress. The skirt was full and around the edge the gold lace glittered. Her red stockings were covered with embroidery and her slippers had large gold buckles on them.

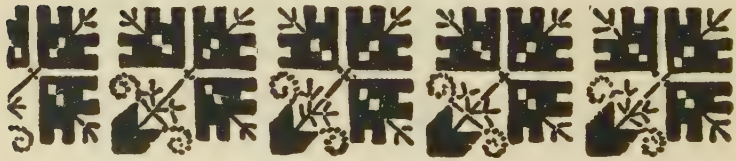
At eleven o'clock Teresa went to the church to be married. Teresa went first with her mother and the madrina, or godmother.



Maria, Garito, and the other two brothers followed just behind them. Then came all the other relatives and guests. The corral was full of people and Coco had to peep between their legs to get a look at Teresa. She went out through the big doorway and all the people followed. Coco was left in the corral.

"They don't think I am part of the family," Coco thought to himself. "I wonder what they left inside the house."

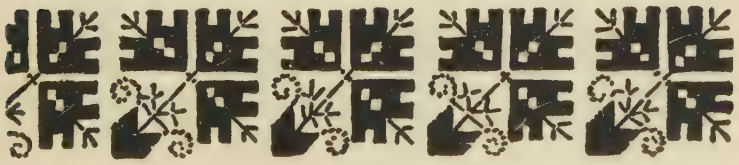
He went and looked in at the door. He



had thought no one was there. One old woman had stayed to look after the wedding dinner which was to be served later. She was fussing around inside, bending over the pots and pans around the fire. She looked cross, and Coco thought he would not worry her.

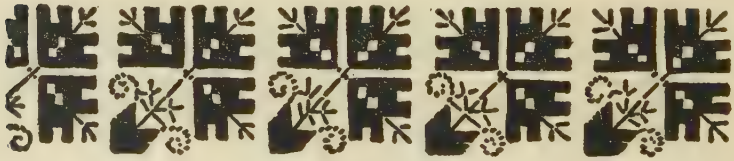
He did say, "Mah-a-a-a-a," very long and loud as he stood outside the door.

The old woman turned and saw Coco. "You go away, Coco," she called out, "I've no time for your nonsense to-day."



Coco wiggled his tail and said, "Mah-a."

He climbed up the steps to the balcony. He was still on the balcony when he heard music in the street. Coco stood on the edge of the balcony and waited. Teresa and Juan came across the corral followed by a great many other people. Coco could see them all. Teresa was smiling and looked very happy. Juan wore a black hat with red pompons on it. His jacket and trousers were black and around his middle he had a broad red sash.

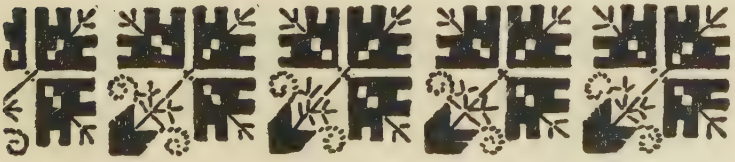


The people crowded into the house. They all ate a great deal and talked about the bride's dance which was to take place in the plaza that afternoon. Coco remembered the Gypsy girl's dance.

"I'll go to the dance," Coco thought. "Maybe they will let me dance, too."

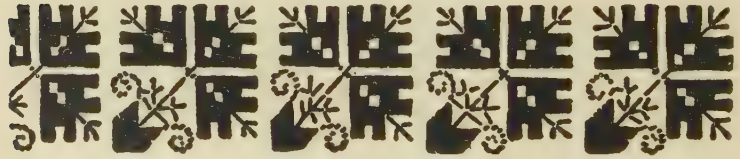
At the thought of dancing, Coco's feet got frisky and he pranced around the balcony. He stood on his hind legs and shook his head.

After everybody had had enough to eat



the musicians played. Teresa came out of the house with the madrina and Juan. The musicians walked behind them and played. All the guests followed them to the plaza. Somebody placed chairs against the wall on the shady side of the plaza. Teresa sat next to the madrina. The musicians began to play. All around the plaza there were people of the village who had come to see the bride dance.

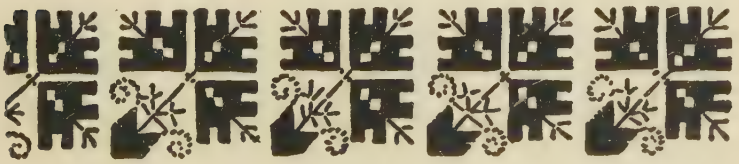
"Teresa is pretty," one woman said, "and her stockings are the finest in the village."

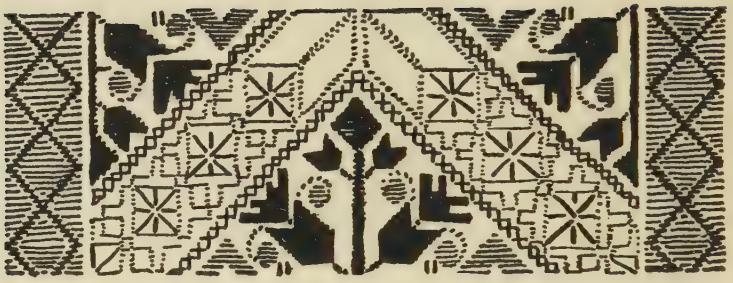


"Look at Juan," another woman exclaimed. "He is a very handsome man."

"And rich, too," another added. "He has three burros, a team of mules, and a cow."

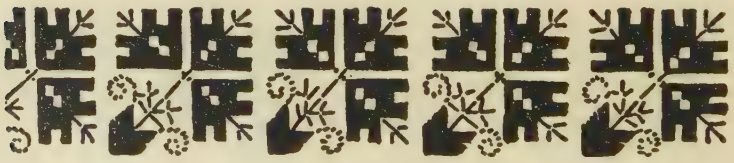
Teresa sat beside the madrina and held an apple in her hand. In the side of the apple a slit had been cut. One of the guests came and asked Teresa to dance. She rose from her chair holding the apple in her hand. The guest who had asked for the dance put a piece of money called a duro in the slit in the apple.





The music began again. Teresa handed the apple to the madrina, who took the money and put it in her lap. Teresa danced, and the gold lace and the buckles on her slippers sparkled as the music grew livelier.

The people around the square clapped their hands in time to the music. At the end of each dance they applauded and said that Teresa danced beautifully. No one noticed Coco, who stood at the edge of the crowd peeping between a fat man's legs.



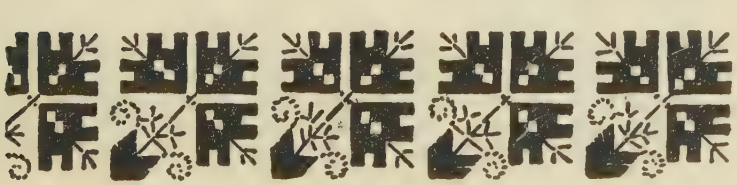
When Teresa had finished a dance Coco dashed between the legs of the fat man and ran across the plaza. The people shouted and laughed as Coco ran. He went straight to Teresa.

"What, Coco, do you want to dance?" Teresa asked.

"Ma-a-a!" Coco answered.

"Play a dance for Coco," Teresa told the musicians.

She danced and Coco pranced about and

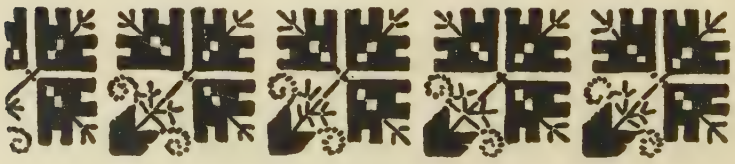


jumped on his hind legs with two white feet in the air. The people shouted and laughed to see Coco dancing with the bride. After the dance there was lots of applause.

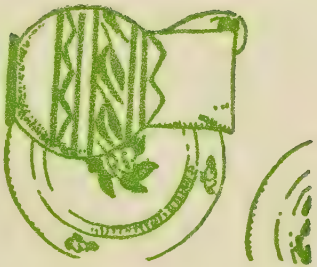
"Come on, Coco," Garito said as he took hold of Coco's collar. "You have had your dance. You can go back to the corral."

"Mah-a-a-a!" Coco screamed. "I don't want to go back. It's much more fun here."

But Garito dragged him home and fastened the door so he could not get out again.



COCO'S FEET GOT FRISKY



COCO RIDES A CAMEL

FALL came and the weather was cooler. Garito carried a blanket when he and the goats went out. He wrapped a warm muffler around his neck. If it rained Garito wore the blanket over his

shoulders like a cape. By the end of November the weather had grown very cold. Sharp winds blew down from the north and Coco was glad to lie in the straw at night, close to his mother to keep warm.

As Christmas drew nearer the cold continued. A few days before Christmas there was snow. It was the first snow Coco had ever seen. The white flakes floated down through the air and lay on the flagstones in the corral. When Coco sniffed at them they melted.

"Funny things," Coco thought; "first they look like feathers and then they turn to water."

The flakes continued to fall until the ground was covered with white.

On Christmas Eve it was very cold. Coco stood in the corral shivering, when Garito came running in from the street.

"Hello, Coco," Garito greeted him, "come in the house and get warm. There's always a place for one more by the fire."

"Mah-a-a," Coco answered gratefully.

Garito opened the door for Coco. They went into the house. Garito's two brothers were sitting by the fire. Garito's mother was frying something in a pan over the fire. It was warm in the room, and the food cooking over the fire had a pleasant odor.

"This is Christmas Eve," one of the brothers said, "the night when nobody sleeps."

"To-night at twelve o'clock all the cows

"COME IN AND GET WARM"

go down on their knees and pray," the other brother said. "Coco can go down on his knees, too, if he likes."

The thought of Coco on his knees struck them as being very funny. They looked at Coco and laughed.

"Ha-a-a," Coco said. "What's the joke?"

Coco went to the fire and sniffed at the pan.

"Don't meddle with the cooking," Garito's mother told him. "The boys have to

eat their supper so they can make music to-night."

Coco lay down at one end of the fireplace and looked at the red coals. As he looked into the fire he thought he could see the Gypsies' camp and the girl dancing in her red dress with a red kerchief on her head.

One of Garito's brothers took a guitar and began to play. As he played he sang a little song about Mary Magdalen. The song said that now she was sitting up in heaven

drinking coffee. It was a long song with many verses. By the time the song was finished supper was ready.

Garito's mother put the supper on the table.

"Tell us a story, mother; the story of the three kings of the Orient," Garito said as he ate his supper.

His mother began, "It was a very long time ago." Then she told the story of the three kings who came to visit a baby who had

been born in a stable and had been put to sleep in a manger while his mother sat by him. The kings had brought presents for the child. They gave the presents to his mother. Then they went back to their homes in the East.

They all listened to the story. Coco wondered how the kings knew the baby was in the manger. He also wondered how long he could stay in the house where it was so nice and warm.

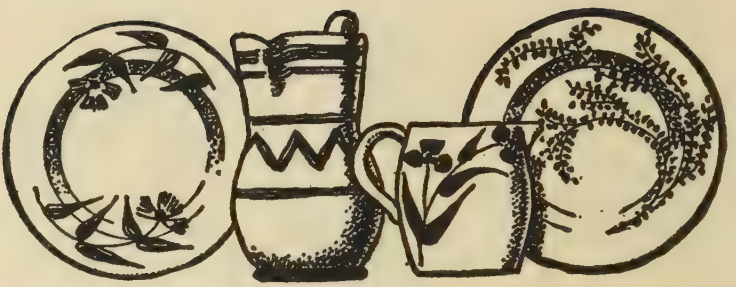
When supper was finished Garito said

that he was going to the tavern with his brothers.

"You must go back to the stable, Coco," Garito announced.

Garito and his brothers put on their hats and wound their mufflers around their necks. Coco went out with them into the corral. He trotted to the stable and tried to cover himself with straw to keep warm.

Coco's nose got very cold and he buried it in the straw. He did not want to get it



frostbitten. Because a frostbitten nose looked very badly and, too, it would be sure to hurt a lot. After a while Coco went to sleep. While he slept he had a dream.

Coco dreamed that he was with three kings who were riding on camels. Of course, Coco was riding on a camel, too. He had never seen a camel and in his dream the camels which he saw looked very much like burros. Coco and the kings rode a long, long time. In his dream Coco began to slip off his

COCO SNIFFED AT THE PAN

camel. Just as he was falling off the camel he woke up. As Coco woke Garito and his two brothers were coming into the corral. They had been at the tavern all night.

Coco said, "Mah-a-a," to let them know he was awake.

"Go to sleep, Coco," Garito said. "This is Christmas morning."

"Mah-a-a," Coco answered as he snuggled down deeper into the straw and went back to sleep.

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